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## Catalanism and the Spanish State, 1898–1939

The Spanish case between 1900 and 1936 – and ever since – was marked by a ‘confrontation of nationalisms’, that is by the antagonism of Spanish nationalism on the one hand, and peripheral nationalisms on the other.<sup>1</sup>

Throughout what can be termed Spain's long nineteenth century, the modernisation of the country was halting and in the view of many authorities, failed. Commentators from Richard Ford to Karl Marx found Spain seriously wanting, the latter referring to a country that suffered from a rule akin to ‘oriental despotism’.<sup>2</sup> Spain seemed unable to reverse its historical decline, falling further behind the major European powers, who were entering a new imperial phase. The comparative weakness of the Spanish state also had consequences for Spain's inability to create a modern, coherent project of national unity. European imperial expansion took place at around the same time as the emergence of the modern programme of nation building and nationalism. Internal consolidation appeared to facilitate overseas expansion. Spain seemed equally unable to participate in either process and saw how its European counterparts built modern and cohesive nation-states, whilst adding overseas possessions. This weak and ineffectual Spanish ‘nationalisation project’ would ensure that Spain's minority national questions, in particular those of the Basque Country and Catalonia, would continue into the twenty-first century.<sup>3</sup> This was compounded by the fact that it was on the periphery of Spain that the earliest expressions of modernisation took place, in particular in the territory of Catalonia which, by the late nineteenth century, was the most dynamic centre of industrial and cultural power found in the Spanish state. The sophistication of Catalan society meant that it produced two key variables that were not present in other areas of Spain: a political nationalism and an indigenous labour movement. In the case of Galicia, nationalism-regionalism was a late arrival and it remained an overwhelmingly rural society into the 1930s. In the Basque Country, the response to rapid industrialisation produced a labour movement largely made up of impoverished southern Spanish migrants and the Basque nationalist movement, which was an expression of the cultural dislocation produced by economic advance and the Spanish-speaking migra-

tion. Thus, in the Catalan case we see in intense form, a rivalry between labour and nationalism to become politically dominant. This mobilising rivalry between labour and Catalanism was not resolved in the favour of the latter until the 1960s. Catalonia was, in the late nineteenth century and into the 1930s, the most complex and advanced society in Spain with a strong middle-class sector. It is striking that so many of the key moments of modern Spanish history were centred in the city of Barcelona: the general strike of 1902; the Tragic Week of 1909; the Assembly movement of 1917; the ‘gun wars’ of 1919–1920 and the launch of the coup by General Primo de Rivera in 1923. Catalonia, due to its strong labour movement and nationalism, remained the key territory of concern to Spanish nationalism into the 1940s.

Due to the historic divergences amongst the territories where Catalan was spoken, the national project that emerged in the late nineteenth century concentrated its energies on the principality of Catalonia. Whilst the cultural, political and economic relations between the other territories in Spain where Catalan is spoken have been, particularly in the Valencian case, complex, the focus on the Principality of Catalonia has become the convention in European historiography. As will be noted later, the post-Franco settlement prevented any greater Catalan unity and the conditions of Francoism led to the emergence of an anti-Catalanist discourse in urban areas of Valencia. Thus in contrast to other national movements of the late nineteenth century, concerned with the largest territorial expansion possible as in the cases of Great Albania or Serbia, or other forms of national unification in the case of Italy and Germany, the case of Catalonia stands out as one where a wider territorial ambition was not claimed. Rather Catalanism became a project centred on a consolidated and affluent Catalonia. Here the Catalan case can be contrasted with the status within Basque nationalism of Navarre, which has been central to Basque national ambition. Thus, whilst the notion of *La terra* (the Land) became key in the emergence of Catalanism, when used it always referred to Catalan land and not to that of Valencia or the Balearics.

Whilst the creation of the Catalan nationalist movement largely coincided with the emergence of the Catalan business class in the nineteenth century, it was not a creation of this class, though Catalanism later served the economic interests of the business class. When considering Catalan nationalism it is important to separate the emergence of nationalism from the idea of national identity. Nationalism can best be understood as a product of modernity.<sup>4</sup> Nationalism as a political movement emerges with varying degrees of strength in Europe over the course of the nineteenth century and involved not only smaller linguistic and cultural communities, but the great powers of Europe.<sup>5</sup> Catalan national identity, or a sense of what it is to be Catalan (*Catalanitat*), preceded the emergence of nationalism as an ideology. For Llobera, ‘nationalism *strictu sensu* is a relatively recent phenomenon, but a rudimentary and restricted national identity existed already in the medieval period’.<sup>6</sup> This form of national consciousness, described by some as being ‘pre-patriotic’, found expression in various forms, in particular in its loyalty to the monarch. As Hastings has noted, ‘medieval historians seem . . . increasingly agreed that in

the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries national identities in western Europe had stabilized in a form . . . that we take for granted.<sup>7</sup> For those who defined themselves as nationalists in the modern period, this pre-modern identity would provide the building blocks for a narrative of national construction: an eternal essence and a thousand years (or more) of 'national history'. Inevitably, with no national state to speak of and periodic phases of cultural and political repression, expressed in their most brutal form under the Franco regime (1939–1975), the Catalan national movement has been defensive. Where Catalanism sought its greatest political mobilisation was in its defence of economic interests, and its first political expression, the *Lliga Regionalista*, maintained throughout its existence the defence of Catalan industry and protectionist measures for it.

Part of the inability of orthodox Marxism to comprehend nationalism (it has been described as its 'greatest theoretical weakness') has been its belief that nationalism has been a tool of the bourgeoisie to distract the masses. This belief was also due to the personal prejudices of Marx and Engels, who were of course products of an ascendent German nation who looked with disdain upon the Slavs in particular. 'The world market, world industries and world literature predicted with such exultation in "The Communist Manifesto" all conducted, in fact to the world of nationalism.'<sup>8</sup>

The development of Catalan nationalism in the nineteenth century closely parallels the three-stage theoretical model established by Miroslav Hroch.<sup>9</sup> The first phase is one of scholarly enquiry and the dissemination of linguistic, cultural and historical attributes. The second phase sees the emergence of a new type of activist who 'awakens' national consciousness. The final phase is the emergence of a mass movement and its divergence into conservative, liberal and democratic strands. In Catalonia each phase corresponds roughly with the periods 1830–1870, 1870–1898 and post-1898. As we will see, these three phases also have strong parallels with developments during the Franco dictatorship, where existing conditions meant that the reconstruction of the Catalan national project was, until the early 1960s, the task of the self-appointed cultural or political activist. Within modern political cultures, there is a frequent confusion in the uses of the modern word 'nation' and the modern concept 'nationalism'. Nationalists demand to be ruled by *their* own, and to have *their* culture, *their* language promoted. In this the demands of nations without states are no different from the unchallenged assumptions of actually existing states, whether Britain, France or Spain. Billig has noted how nationalism and expression of national identity occur in all nation states.<sup>10</sup>

The French historian Pierre Vilar has argued that Basque nationalism began, 'as the reaction of an economically advanced region against the underdeveloped political leadership of the country'. For Vilar, Catalan nationalism 'fits even better this definition', although he acknowledges that Catalan nationalism 'began as a manifestation of linguistic renewal'.<sup>11</sup> Part of the explanation for the strength of Catalan and Basque nationalism lies in the fact that the Spanish state had little over a century to attempt the cultural homogenisation of its population. After perhaps two centuries of decline, by the late eighteenth

century Catalonia was experiencing an economic revival and became the first area of Spain to undergo industrialisation, and by 1790 Catalan cotton production was second only to that of England. The textile industry in Catalonia would play a fundamental part in the economic regeneration of Catalonia throughout the nineteenth century and would benefit Catalan cultural revival through the patronage that became possible due to this industrial revolution and the material improvements this allowed.

The rumblings of Catalan cultural revival can be discerned in the publication of *Gramàtica i Apologia de la Llengua Catalana* (a Grammar and Defence of the Catalan Language) in 1814 by the Catalan priest Josep Pau Ballot. This work can be cited as an early illustration of the internationalisation of cultural production, as the first quarter of the nineteenth century was marked by a great European interest in the origins of languages and a focus on their grammatical structure was prominent in studies undertaken throughout Europe. It is this period that saw the creation of the Indo-European 'family tree' with its subdivisions of Celtic, Romance etc. Literate elites in Europe increasingly turned to the languages of their own countries, a process which reversed the adoption of French or German as the languages of the 'cultured gentleman'. Pushkin wrote in Russian, grammars appeared in languages such as Irish and Polish, and the trajectory of the Catalan revival demonstrated that Catalonia participated in the mainstream of European developments. Throughout the next two centuries Catalonia would be much more inclined to adopt the latest cultural and political trends from Europe than was the case in the rest of the Iberian peninsula.

The Catalan cultural renaissance, the *Renaixença*, was the Catalan response to the Romantic movement. Romanticism produced a European-wide phenomena of interest in the past of the nations with and without states.<sup>12</sup> The Romantics, witnessing the emergence of industrial capitalism, praised the supposed idyllic purity of the rural world and invoked the rural populace as bearers of the true essence of the people. Usually urban dwellers themselves, they felt particularly strongly the sundering of themselves from their historic cultural community, which they located in the countryside. 'The land as a historically unique and poetic landscape, as a decisive influence over historical events and as the witness to ethnic survival . . . these are all components of a general process of "territorialization of memory"',<sup>13</sup>

The Catalan *Renaixença* was a project of cultural revivalism to restore a perceived broken continuity with the past. The early Catalanists looked to the medieval empire of Aragon-Catalonia as a pre-industrial Golden Age and praised all its apparent glories. 'Golden Ages provide essential blueprints for realizing the national self and for encouraging the process of national regeneration'.<sup>14</sup> Catalonia at that time was a European conquering power, its economic strength centred on the port of Barcelona and its cultural vitality rested on the Catalan language. In the *Renaixença*, following the examples of their European contemporaries, Catalan intellectuals undertook the study and promotion of the Catalan language, law and folklore. All of the movements of national revival had their poetical input, frequently using the Epic form to re-

launch the nation, and the publication of Carles Aribau's *Oda a la Pàtria* (Ode to the Fatherland) in 1833 is usually seen as the beginning of the cultural Renaissance. As with other European territories in the same period, the construction of a national narrative began. As Berger has noted, 'many of the tropes of national belonging and identity, which were prominent ingredients of national histories, went back to medieval and early modern times'.<sup>15</sup> In 1859 a medieval poetry contest, the *Jocs Florals* (Floral Games), was revived, part of a pattern elsewhere in Europe including the Highland Games in Scotland and the Eisteddfod in Wales, where the rural in particular was evoked. However, unlike in the Basque Country, the nationalist movement that emerged in Catalonia was not anti-urban.

Whilst the Catalan language still remained the vernacular for the majority of the population (a majority still overwhelmingly rural), it had been the urban middle classes and the rapidly growing bourgeoisie who had undergone the most extensive Castilianisation. For a period in the nineteenth century the language of 'progress' in Catalonia became Spanish. 'The Catalan bourgeoisie of the nineteenth century had enthusiastically devoted itself to the task of the construction of the modern Spanish nation and had gone on to relegate its own language to the position of a subordinate one'.<sup>16</sup> However, amongst the Catalan intellectual elite a rise in the status of Catalan did occur. 'The national or would-be national middle class is always compelled to "turn to the people" ... what are the implications of turning to the people ... First of all, speaking their language'.<sup>17</sup> As Marfany has shown, 'it is evident that at a certain point the attempt at the construction of Spain based on the Castilian cultural tradition was experienced by many Catalans as an intolerable threat to its *Catalanitat*'.<sup>18</sup> Early Catalanism was directed to these urban sectors of Catalan society and a standardisation of the language was undertaken, a task not completed until the early twentieth century, with the publication of Pompeu Fabra's Catalan dictionary. Significantly the work of Pompeu Fabra sought whenever possible to 'purify' the language of Spanish loan words, often choosing words from the countryside as the standard that were unknown in the city of Barcelona.

As Catalan industrialisation proceeded apace, the contrast between Catalonia and the agrarian stagnation of the rest of the Spanish peninsula became apparent. This economic divergence had a cultural consequence. From being seen as an agent of backwardness to be abandoned in the race into the 'modern world', the Catalan language, by the end of the nineteenth century became, for Catalan economic and cultural elites, an agent of modernisation. In the history of Catalan in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the language experienced many problems, but never that of low status in the eyes of the populace. This can be contrasted with experiences of languages such as Occitan, Breton and Irish, where associations with rural 'backwardness' made language revival particularly difficult, if not impossible. The peculiarity of Catalan nationalism was to be based in an economically advanced territory, but as part of a state that lagged behind in the development of European capitalism and industrialisation. The agrarian stagnation of Spain's nineteenth century would feed into the modernising discourse of liberal Catalanism. The faltering

development of a modernised Spanish liberalism was unable to find a project that included a role for Catalonia.<sup>19</sup> If 'progress' meant urbanisation and industrialisation, then Catalonia was 'advanced' whilst the rest of the territory of the Spanish state was 'backward'. It was the overwhelmingly 'rural' aspect to Spain that meant that Catalan nationalism, once it was a consolidated ideology, felt itself to be fully comfortable with notions of the city, modernity and the future. During the course of the nineteenth century, the twin processes of Catalan industrialisation and the *Renaixença* became entwined, and gave the Catalanist movement sufficient vigour to launch a political movement at the end of the 1890s. For Pi Sunyer, 'the *Renaixença* was distinct from, but not unrelated to, the political and economic discontents that moved the industrial elite'.<sup>20</sup>

The Catalanist movement of the nineteenth century can also be viewed as a reaction to the project of state modernisation undertaken by the Spanish liberals. As with the Basque Country, rural Catalonia was the heartland of the anti-modern and ultra-Catholic movement known as Carlism. Whilst not a nationalist movement, Carlism did support local rights and privileges under the rubric of the ancient charters known as *fueros*. Spanish state modernisation demanded more rational and efficient state structures and produced a centralisation of government and administration. Herr has noted how the 1812 Constitution of Cádiz accelerated centralising tendencies within the Spanish state.<sup>21</sup> Yet whilst Catalans felt a strong sense of Catalan identity, this did not prevent them being part of the wider Spanish opposition to the Napoleonic invasion and occupation: 'no region was more loyal to the Spanish anti-Napoleonic war'.<sup>22</sup> As will be seen repeatedly throughout this study, Catalanism was not a movement seeking the independence of Catalonia. The division of Spain into *provincias* (provinces) followed the model initiated by France in the creation of the *département* and ended the official recognition of areas such as Catalonia and Galicia. The Spanish language was given official status over Catalan in the Church in 1828.<sup>23</sup> The Spanish education laws of 1825 and 1857 gave no rights to languages other than Castilian and followed the Jacobin centralising model produced by the French state. A form of Spanish monetary union was completed in 1837 with the abolition of Catalonia's separate currency. 'Governments in the early modern period broke down barriers to trade within their dominions, abolishing internal customs duties and instituting common systems of weights and measures and a common currency'.<sup>24</sup>

A significant contribution to political Catalanism came from the Spanish political movement known as Federalism. Significantly, this movement was inspired by the federalist arrangements not in Europe but in the United States and when authors spoke of a 'Catalan State', this is to be understood in an American political context. In May 1879, a Catalan language federalist publication had appeared: *Diari Català*. In October 1880 the Federalist, Valentí Almirall called the first Catalanist Congress, which inspired the creation of the *Centre Català* (Catalan Centre), which later led to the formation of the *Lliga de Catalunya* (Catalan League). This also signified the breach of the Catalan movement with the wider Spanish Federalists.<sup>25</sup> The *Lliga* was a more consciously nationalist group, though it was not a political party. The

Catalanist movement was still in its 'pre-political' phase. The first public commitment to a Catalanist political agenda was made in the document known as *Memorial de Greuges* (Report of Grievances) of March 1885, presented to the King of Spain, Alfonso XII. The striking thing about the document was its professed loyalty to Spain and the King. The main concerns of the *Memorial* were the maintenance of the Catalan Legal Code and a call for a protectionist policy for Catalan industry. The question of protection for Catalan industry would be one that would accelerate the need for political organisation and deepened tensions with Madrid. Catalan industry, advanced in a Spanish context, was in no position to compete with Britain, France or Germany. However, Catalan protectionism was continually resisted by the landowner-dominated political class in Madrid which gave a further spur to Catalan organisation. The *Fomento de Trabajo Nacional* (Promotion of National Employment) became the main lobbying entity on behalf of Catalan protectionist policy and a key actor in its own right, being closely linked to the political organisations of conservative Catalanism.

The publication of the *Memorial de Greuges* provoked rage in Madrid amongst the political classes, and the word 'separatist' was bandied about in the press. The anger reached the Spanish parliament, almost causing the fall of the government. This was the first real indication of a process that would be repeated in the decades to follow: actual Catalan moderation provoking a furious counter-reaction centred on Madrid. This hostility from Madrid accelerated the moves towards political organisation. The *Unió Catalanista* (Catalanist Union) was created in 1891 as a federation of nationalist associations. The *Unió* called a conference of all persuasions of Catalanists to the town of Manresa in 1892, with the aim of drawing up a document that would help delineate a Catalanist agenda. This conference became the most important political event of this period and culminated in a manifesto entitled *Bases* for a Catalan Regional Constitution. The *Bases* of Manresa, as they came to be known, was the first formulation of nationalist demands, and they attained a canonical status as a foundational document of Catalanism. The third *base* declared that 'the Catalan language will be the only one with official status that can be used in Catalonia and in the relations between this region and the central power'. Amongst the objectives of Catalanism, was 'a system of public instruction adapted to the "needs and character of Catalonia"'.<sup>26</sup> The control of education and the language of instruction, was one of the key elements in nineteenth century European nationalist movements. The *Bases* provided a reference point for future autonomous movements in Catalonia and agreed to give to the Spanish state the responsibility for international relations including those pertaining to the economy, defence and the maintenance of a transport infrastructure.

Until the 1890s, the Catalan bourgeoisie maintained a distance from this political Catalanism.<sup>27</sup> Divisions that would become more profound in the early decades of the twentieth century began to appear in this early wave of Catalanism and the Catalan business class as a whole remained suspicious of radical trends within the former Federalist Catalanists. From the 1870s to

1898 Catalan business had benefitted from the existence of Spain's Colonial Empire. Since the 1870s, Spain had been challenged by a Cuban nationalist revolt and it was notable that Catalan conservative support prioritised its important economic ties with the island and felt little sympathy with the insurrection against Spanish rule. The Catalan business community was not only unsupportive of Cuban demands for autonomy, it was equally fearful of a political movement that smacked of radicalism.<sup>28</sup> Spain's war against Cuban secession had its own repercussions in the trajectory of Catalanism. Firstly, Catalan progressive opinion was supportive of Cuba and political tensions can be traced to the different positions taken on the 'Cuban question'. Secondly, and parallel to the emergence of the ideologies of Carlism, Federalism, Republicanism and Catalanism, was the slow growth and consolidation of organised labour in Catalonia. By the 1880s, there were three principal labour organisations in Catalonia and by the early 1890s, working-class organisations were increasingly able to successfully call strikes and demonstrations. However in this early phase of the organised working class, it had still to find its form of organisation and ideological coherence, with a variety of strands competing. Ultimately, Catalan labour would make the world historical decision to mobilise around the tenets of anarchism and its trade union expression, anarcho-syndicalism. In turn, this would mean that Catalan organised labour became one of the most militant in Europe, giving a particular intensity to social conflict before the Spanish Civil War. The emergence of an anarchist-syndicalist labour movement, Angel Smith has shown, was due to a combination of employer intransigence, the corrupt political system in Spain of fraudulent elections known as *El Turno Pacífico*, the violence of state authorities and the specific conditions of Catalan industrialisation.<sup>29</sup>

The 1890s were a pivotal decade in the politicisation and organisation of conservative elites in Catalonia. 'The Cuban crisis, anarchist attacks, the ineffectiveness of the existing political regime brought about a shift amongst a good part of the bourgeoisie (industrial and mercantile), and brought it to the political arena to struggle in the defence of its interests, firstly in a purely economic way, and through this economic struggle, into politics'.<sup>30</sup> The shock of Spanish defeat by the United States in the 'catastrophe' of 1898 reverberated throughout Spain. In Catalonia the loss of the colonies of Cuba and the Philippines demonstrated with great clarity to industrialists the failure of the Castilian agrarian-dominated state to protect the overseas markets that were of such importance in Catalonia. Almost 60 per cent of Catalan exports had gone to Cuba. The loss of the colonies increased the importance to Catalan industry of the Spanish market as a whole, and thus Catalonia became more strongly tied to Spain.

The immediate post-1898 period saw the intellectuals and elites of Spain engage in the search for an explanation for Spanish failure. This project became known as the Regenerationist movement. A parallel process occurred in Catalonia and one outcome was the creation in 1901 of the *Lliga Regionalista de Catalunya* (Regionalist League of Catalonia) to contest the national elec-

tions of the same year. One of the founding statutes of the *Lliga* called on it 'to work by all legitimate means for the autonomy of the Catalan people within the Spanish state'. The modest success of the *Lliga* in Barcelona in the elections of 1901 signified the first rupture in the dominance of the Restoration parties.<sup>31</sup> However, as Balfour has noted, 'it was regionalism, in particular the Catalan variety, which gave shape to the new nationalism of the military'.<sup>32</sup> The Spanish military, attributing to the political-class blame for the rapid defeat by the United States, increasingly came to embody a belief in its divine mission to preserve the integrity of the Spanish fatherland. Growing tension between Madrid and Barcelona was made apparent in an event known as the *tancament de caixes*, which brought to the fore all of the social, cultural and political differences between the two great cities of Spain.<sup>33</sup> The Spanish government sought to raise money by taxation, rather than reform of a sclerotic political system. Industrialists and petit bourgeois sectors were soon united in refusing to pay the tax: by September 1899 most of these sectors were refusing to pay. The government response was severe and the 'closing of the tills', which lasted almost three months, accelerated the decision to organise politically in the defence of Catalan interests.<sup>34</sup> All was expressive of a growing disillusionment with an unreformed Spain.

Almost immediately the *Lliga* was forced to determine its attitude towards the social question with the outbreak of a general strike in 1902. The intransigence of Catalan employers had seen them employ the tactic of the lockout in 1901 in an attempt to break the leadership of Catalan labour. The general strike of February 1902 brought industry in Barcelona to a halt and was the first real expression of the growing anarchist movement. The strike saw high levels of violence, with over 300 labour activists arrested and 14 killed. The *Lliga* did not hesitate: it sided with the owners of property and this fed into already existing anarchist suspicion of 'bourgeois nationalism'. The parameters of militant labour and Catalanist bourgeois sectors left little room for the emergence of a progressive Catalanism and this conflict would be further intensified with the increasing arrival of Spanish-speaking migration in the early decades of the twentieth century. Anarchist influence in Catalonia would be severely tested following the defeat of the general strike with the movement again subject to severe repression. Barcelona remained the city of greatest concern for Spanish ruling elites with over a quarter of all Spanish strike activity taking place in the city. A new element in Catalan politics would increase in importance: the fracture between workers and employers. Sections within anarchism had been influenced by the strategy of Propaganda of the Deed but rising labour militancy saw the movement prioritise the reconstruction of the labour movement.<sup>35</sup>

The close links between Catalan industry and the Spanish market explains why the political expression of the regionalists and Catalan business, the *Lliga Regionalista*, did not look for separation from the Spanish state. In fact, Catalan nationalism had a negligible presence of pro-independence sectors. Even so, the loss of Cuba and the parallel rise of Catalan regionalism was perceived as a threat to the integrity of Spain, particularly by the Spanish

military.<sup>36</sup> Llobera points out that, for Spanish elites, the definition of the Spanish nation contracted. In 1812 it had included Spanish America and until 1898, the Philippines and Cuba. After 1898 all that remained was the Spanish peninsula, within which both Catalan and Basque nationalisms were growing.<sup>37</sup> The political strength of the *Lliga* meant that the Catalan question could no longer be ignored by the Spanish state, as the *Lliga* became the hegemonic conservative force in Catalonia for the next quarter century. Orthodox Marxist historiography has interpreted the conflict that dominated Spanish parliamentary life in the first quarter of the twentieth century as that between Castilian 'political' dominance and Catalan 'economic' dominance: between a bourgeois Catalonia and a semi-feudal Castilian-dominated Spain.<sup>38</sup> Whilst this view does indeed capture part of Spanish reality, it was rather Spanish state weakness and its inability to impose a centralised uniformity that determined much of political reality in the early years of the twentieth century.

The period after the end of empire and the humiliation of Spain internationally, became, under the reign of Alfonso XIII (1902–1917), an era of growing tension whose most serious manifestations occurred in Catalonia, with the growth of both working-class anarcho-syndicalism and a regionalist-nationalist movement. Whilst peasant revolt in particular marked southern Spain, the dual element in the Catalan equation, labour and nationalism was, in European terms, a combination of threats to the state that was unique. In the period 1900–1923 there were four distinct political movements in Catalonia. Firstly, there were the liberal Catalanists, the inheritors of the movements that had emerged in the 1880s and 1890s, exclusively concerned with developments in Catalonia. They made several attempts at creating political parties but were plagued by internal divisions and they remained weak until the conditions of dictatorship in Spain in the 1920s. The second force were the Regionalists, the *Lliga Regionalista*, who whilst Catalanist were essentially concerned with the relationship of Catalonia with Spain and the defence of principally business interests. The third element were the anti-Catalanist and anti-clerical republicans of Barcelona centred around Alejandro Lerroux. The Radicals, as the political party was known, received financial subsidies from Madrid in a bid to create working-class opposition to the Catalanist movement. The final element was also centred in Barcelona and comprised the syndicalist movement that increasingly adopted the ideology of anarchism, and would in time make Barcelona an anarchist stronghold. Over time, the Radicals would diminish in importance leaving an anarcho-syndicalist dominated labour movement and two competing strands of Catalanism: liberal and conservative. In the case of the Catalanist movement, these two strands also expressed a division between, on the one hand, the Catalan middle classes and the other, the rural and industrial elites, the key constituency of the *Lliga*.

The period 1907–1909 saw a brief attempt to unite Catalanists in the *Solidaritat Catalana* (Catalan Solidarity), which contested the elections of 1907 with enormous success, winning 41 of 44 seats in Catalonia. The context to this brief moment of unity was the attack by the Spanish military on

a satirical newspaper which was deemed to have mocked the 'honour' of the military. In an undisciplined rampage, the offices of the Catalan language *La Veu de Catalunya*, the newspaper of Catalan regionalism, were also ransacked. Yet the government in Madrid simply appeased the military, passing a measure known as the Law of Jurisdiction, meaning press attacks on the armed forces could be tried under military law. It was this measure above all that produced the movement of cross-party and class Catalan unity and its landslide victory. However, the movement struggled to maintain this unity beyond 1907 and it was fully broken in 1909 by the events known as the Tragic Week. There would be no further cross-class movement of unity in Catalouïa until the early 1970s.

The Radical movement led by Alejandro Lerroux remained one of the few constituencies outside of *Solidaritat Catalana* and although briefly sidelined, Lerroux's movement was pivotal in the events of the Tragic Week. These years had also witnessed a growth in anti-clericalism, which remained a key ideological element to the Radicals. In both 1823 and 1835 there had been anti-clerical explosions in Catalonia, a demonstration of their deep roots in Catalan political culture. The Tragic Week demonstrated that for the Catalan working-class social and religious issues were more important than the regional question.<sup>39</sup> During this week three members of the clergy were killed, some 80 churches, convents and religious establishments were destroyed. This was one of the most violent episodes of the period in Europe and it resulted in 104 deaths and the arrest of over 2,000. The varying strands of the Catalan left unleashed their fury on an institution that was deemed to embody opposition to progress: the Church. The Catalan Church was viewed as part of the governing elite, and the attacks on the Church were understood by those that participated as attacks on hierarchy and power. Inevitably, the Tragic Week terrified the conservative sectors within society and made reform of the Spanish state less, not more likely. The repression unleashed and the dependence on the military brought a neo-conservative turn on the part of the ruling elites and the end to the prospects of reform. The conservative hopes that had been invested in Antonio Maura collapsed with his forced departure from office and a further opportunity at the reform of Spain was lost.

In the period after the Tragic Week of 1909, the reconfiguration of the Catalan labour movement took place. In 1910 the *Confederación Nacional del Trabajo* (National Confederation of Labour), CNT was created, which rapidly adopted the ideology of anarcho-syndicalism. The rising power and influence of the CNT would also impact on Catalanism as the *Lliga* took an increasingly social conservative position. The influence of anarchism and anarcho-syndicalism also impacted on the Catalanist left as anarchism was particularly unsympathetic to anything that smacked of 'bourgeois nationalism'. Anarchism, unlike social democracy or other variants of Marxism, did not develop a theory of nationalism or sympathy for national identity. The distancing of anarchism from the national question would have important implications for the development of the Catalan national movement. Thus, the principal body of the organised working class was hostile to or, at best, indif-

ferent to nationalist agitation. The early years of the twentieth century seemed to directly associate Catalanism with conservative interests, embodied in the *Lliga*. The Catalanism of the centre-left and middle-class professionals seemed unable to appeal to the working-class constituency and was itself prone to factionalism and internal divisions.

The crisis of 1909 shattered the unity of the *Solidaritat*, and the *Lliga Regionalista* re-emerged to contest the elections of 1910, where it was heavily defeated. The radicals emerged strengthened after 1909 but their influence would peak in 1914–1915 and would gradually diminish thereafter.<sup>40</sup> The *Lliga* had presented itself as the party of order and was punished by siding with the authorities. Catalan elites and members of affluent strata of Catalan society were however terrified by the popular violence and the outbreaks of violence in the southern Spanish countryside. However the rapid repression of the latter, barely posing a threat to the established order, can be contrasted with the Catalan situation. Thus the social tensions in Catalonia had no parallel in any other area of Spain. Yet at the same time, there was a Catalan regionalist movement seeking to radically transform Spain from above.<sup>41</sup> The *Lliga* now looked to Madrid in the hope of obtaining concessions for the creation of a form of home rule government. The period 1910–1914 was marked of course by the campaign for Home Rule in Ireland, the trajectory of which was followed with great interest in the Catalan press.<sup>42</sup> The *Lliga* adopted the strategy known as *pactisme*. *Pactisme* was the name given to the Catalan pragmatic tradition of obtaining concessions from Madrid, through parliamentary support for the government. This tradition was to re-emerge in the late 1970s and beyond.

In 1914 the first institutional expression of Catalanism was created: the *Mancomunitat* (Commonwealth). The *Mancomunitat* was not the result of the concession of powers from Madrid, rather it united in one body the powers of the provincial *Diputacions*, which by 1920 had ceded all their powers to the new body. These were the four provinces in Catalonia: Barcelona, Tarragona, Lleida and Girona, all of which had been created in 1833. Throughout its existence the *Mancomunitat* was dominated by the *Lliga*, a confirmation of its parliamentary hegemony in Catalonia. The long-term significance of the *Mancomunitat* lay in its promotion of Catalan culture and its programme of Catalanisation.<sup>43</sup> It would be seen subsequently in the first phase of the restoration of Catalan autonomy in 1932. The official status given to the Catalan language prepared the ground for the increase in publications in Catalan experienced throughout the 1920s, in spite of the persecutions under General Miguel Primo de Rivera. More importantly, the *Mancomunitat* was not only understood at the time as the first step to greater Catalan autonomy, it also contributed to the structural modernisation of the Catalan economy. There seemed to be an ever greater vitality to Catalonia. In 1916, during the First World War, Francesc Cambó, himself the paradigmatic representative of conservative Catalanism, spoke of his hope of a future change in Catalonia's status: 'At the peace conference Catalonia will be able to affirm: we do not feel represented by this state [i.e. Spain].'<sup>44</sup>

However, the maelstrom confronting European societies would feed through into political developments in Spain. Spanish neutrality in the First World War created an economic boom, as neutrality offered opportunities to sell foodstuffs and manufactured goods to all of the belligerent powers. The effects of the boom were particularly pronounced in Catalonia. The response of the Madrid government, dominated by agrarian interests, was to propose a tax on excessive industrial profits, meaning the great loser would be the Catalan business class. Once again, 'agrarian' Spain clashed with the industrial might of Catalonia. One of Cambó's senior colleagues described the proposed tax as 'an economic monstrosity and a criminal attempt to hurt industry in Catalonia and in Spain as a whole'.<sup>45</sup> Social stability became further strained from 1917 as the impact of the Bolshevik seizure of power in Russia resonated in the Catalan labour movement, as it did throughout Europe. At first the anarcho-syndicalist *Confederación Nacional del Trabajo* aligned itself to the Third International, though this support was withdrawn as the persecution of dissent and the crushing of the Russian anarchists revealed to the CNT the 'authoritarian' nature of Bolshevism-Leninism.<sup>46</sup> The first workers' revolution in world history created an atmosphere of ruling-class fear and working-class confidence that the tide of history was moving in its direction. The period of class conflict was accentuated by the end of the First World War and the ending of the economic opportunities created by the war. According to the conservative historian Stanley Payne, the number of 'political crimes' that took place in Barcelona between 1917 and 1921 was greater than that of the next five Spanish cities put together.<sup>47</sup> The intensity of the social struggle was not yet affected by cleavages over language and identity, this was rather class conflict in its purest form. Until the 1960s, the Catalan-speaking working class remained greater in number than their Spanish-speaking counterparts.<sup>48</sup>

Between 1917 and 1936, like the majority of its European counterparts, Spain can be described as a state in crisis. The crises experienced by the Spanish state were particularly intense in Catalonia. 1917 commenced with a triple challenge to Restoration Spain. There was a revolutionary general strike, the creation of the *Assemblea de Parlamentaris* (Assembly of Parliamentarians) led from Catalonia by the *Lliga*, a movement which once again looked to a modernisation of the Spanish state and reform of the corrupt parliament.<sup>49</sup> There was also the return to active political engagement on the part of the Spanish military through the creation of the *Juntas de Defensa* (Defence Councils), which was symptomatic of their dissatisfaction with the political class's inability to deal with 'disorder'. These three events produced a crisis of the state. The *Lliga*, seeking to be the leading modernising force in Spain became trapped: 'the innate contradiction in their objectives of hegemony both in Madrid and in Barcelona, combined with their social conservatism, would lead the *Lliga* down a blind alley'.<sup>50</sup>

The growing strength of the anarchist movement meant that between 1914 and 1923 there was a growing decline in electoral participation.<sup>51</sup> The complex nature of the political situation in Catalonia divided Catalanists. The *Lliga* unambiguously sided with 'law and order', provoking a split and a new party

to emerge called *Acció Catalana* (Catalan Action). Other Catalanists earned the sympathy of the anarchists, such as in the case of the lawyer Lluís Companys, who defended CNT activists. Renewed attempts by left and liberal Catalanists to end the domination of the *Lliga* saw the creation of new formations. However, the tendency of these elements to splits and disagreement meant that Catalanist liberals would be unable to unify until 1931. The years 1917–1920 have been described as the 'Red Triennium' and were followed by three years of gun wars on the streets of Barcelona, during which employers engaged the services of *pistoleros* (gunmen) and anarchist militants responded in kind. These years were marked by an overt class conflict and Catalan nationalism became relegated as a concern amongst the elites and supporters of the *Lliga*. One last phase of the 'Catalanist offensive' was the push for Catalan autonomy of 1918–1919, inspired by Wilsonian promises of self-determination. However, the increasing factionalism of the party system in Madrid and the fears of escalating social disorder, with peasant jacqueries in Andalusia and industrial militancy in Catalonia, saw the *Lliga* again return to its conservative social agenda. The viciousness of the Barcelona 'lockout' of 1919–1920, a struggle involving over 200,000 workers, accelerated the *Lliga*'s siding with the authorities in Madrid.<sup>52</sup>

The *Lliga*'s prioritisation of the agenda of 'law and order' culminated in the encouragement and support given to the military coup d'état of General Miguel Primo de Rivera in 1923. Primo de Rivera was the Captain-General of Catalonia and the *Lliga* saw him as the saviour of Catalonia and Spain. For Shlomo Ben-Ami, conflict in Catalonia was the source of Primo de Rivera's dictatorship due to the fear amongst the Catalan bourgeoisie that 'a social catastrophe was imminent'.<sup>53</sup> Thus one of the early actions of Primo de Rivera was the prohibition of the CNT in 1924, followed by the arrest of its leading activists and the suppression of its publications. The CNT was forced underground and one consequence of this was the creation in 1927 of its radical conscience: the *Federación Anarquista Iberica*, (Iberian Anarchist Federation), FAI. The military government of Primo de Rivera was part of a wider phenomenon of Rightist reaction in southern and central Europe in the 1920s in response to the power of organised labour and a perception of crisis in the legitimacy of the state. Parliamentary liberalism collapsed throughout much of Europe, to be replaced by radical right and military governments. During the Primo de Rivera dictatorship (1923–1930), a number of more radical groups, with middle-class support, challenged the *Lliga*'s dominance of Catalanism. This occurred because of the *Lliga*'s conservatism and support of Primo de Rivera's public order agenda, and its inability to prevent the attacks on Catalanism and Catalan culture made during the dictatorship. The Catalanist middle classes believed the *Lliga* and its supporters placed their economic interests before Catalanism, as the events of the years between 1917 and 1923 had demonstrated.<sup>54</sup>

The nature of the dictatorship was seriously misjudged by the leading figures of conservative Catalanism, as Primo de Rivera and his supporters were also greatly concerned at the nationalist challenges emanating from Catalonia

and the Basque Country. As Quiroga has noted, 'peripheral nationalism constituted the negative pole in the *primoriverista* conception of Spain'.<sup>55</sup> The cautious Catalanisation that had begun with the establishment of the *Mancomunitat* in 1914 was reversed by Primo de Rivera with its abolition in 1925. In 1926 Barcelona Football Club was closed as was the *Orfeò Català* (Catalan Choral Society), an association deeply imbued with Catalanist tradition.<sup>56</sup> The clumsy persecution unleashed by the dictatorship deepened Catalanist sentiment over the course of the 1920s. At times during the dictatorship, radical and pro-independence Catalanists attained unprecedented influence, though this would fade post-1931.<sup>57</sup> In 1925, the leading liberal Catalanist Francesc Macià brought international attention to Catalonia by an attempted insurrection in Prats de Molló. The event, whilst farcical in its execution, greatly raised the profile of Macià and he increasingly came to embody left and liberal opposition to the dictatorship.

The cultural repression of Catalanism under Primo de Rivera resulted not only in a growth in nationalist feeling. It also generated sympathy amongst Spanish Republicans and Socialists for the future recognition of Catalan autonomy. The rapprochement between Catalan and Castilian intellectuals had been growing in the final years of the dictatorship and there was a growing Spanish sympathy for the right of Catalonia to defend its own language and cultural identity.<sup>58</sup> Thus the reformist movement that would launch the Second Spanish Republic in 1931 included in its programme the concession of political autonomy to Catalonia. The political agreement that became known as the Pact of San Sebastián contained the promise to support the establishment of a Catalan regional parliament. Though even this was felt not to go far enough for the leading Catalan republican Macià, who would proclaim a radically conceived Catalan state and republic within a Spanish federation.<sup>59</sup> The words of Macià, proclaimed from the balcony of the historic building of Catalan government, the *Generalitat* in Barcelona, were an early indication that perceptions within the principality would be markedly different from those held by the new Republican authorities, notwithstanding their apparent sympathy for Catalan autonomy.<sup>60</sup> The 1930s would also come to represent a period of the radicalisation of the workers movement in Spain and the clash between the Catalan working class, mobilised around anarchism, and Catalanism would deepen. Primo de Rivera's dictatorship allowed for rapid development of the Catalan economy and one consequence was the increasing Spanish-speaking migrants to urban areas. This immigration increasingly came from Spain's impoverished south and a Catalan quasi-racist discourse fed into perceptions of what became known as the '*murciano*'. Catalan politics in the 1930s had thus a new source of tension, with the CNT often being seen as coterminous with foreign Spanish influence.<sup>61</sup>

## The Church in Catalonia and Catalanism

Princess of our noble Catalan land  
Oh Virgin of the mountain  
... pious Mother of this land that has  
always loved you, make it great  
and powerful.<sup>62</sup>

The Church in Catalonia played a prominent role in the nineteenth century formulation of Catalan nationalism, as it did in its reconstruction during the Franco dictatorship. As early as 1760, the *Memorial de Agravios* (Report of Grievances) was presented to the Madrid *Cortes* by representatives of the Kingdom of Aragón. The report referred to the diminished official position of the Catalan language and to the danger of alienating the Catalan peasantry if priests and bishops in Catalonia were unfamiliar with the Catalan language.<sup>63</sup> For much of the nineteenth century the Church found an outlet for the defence of its value system in its association with Carlism. Carlism was the strongest anti-modern movement of the mid and late nineteenth century. 'In the years after 1815 many of the Catholic clergy developed a full-scale resistance to the "modern world".'<sup>64</sup> In an expression of concern at the consequences of the 'modern', the Bishop of Barcelona declared in 1860 that, 'truly the times are bad, extremely bad'.<sup>65</sup> One estimate has it that in the early 1880s, 90 per cent of Catalan priests were Carlists, though by the time of the Second Republic Carlism had little presence in Catalonia.<sup>66</sup> This was because the Carlist critique of modernisation and centralisation became incorporated into conservative Catalanism. In developments that would mirror the experience of early twentieth century Catalan regionalism, a letter of 1890 from the Bishop of Barcelona which called for the teaching of the catechism in Catalan received ferocious attacks from members of the Spanish parliament in Madrid.

It was the prominent role taken by Father Josep Torras i Bages in the late nineteenth century that began a process of clerical involvement with nationalism-regionalism. The Catalan language was the pivot around which this change occurred and Torras wrote his first pastoral letter as the Bishop of Vic (1899) in Catalan. This close association with the language can be contrasted with Ireland where the Church was instrumental in supporting the transition from Irish to English. However the Catalan faithful remained Catalan-speaking. This process of religious Catalanisation was initiated in 1880 when the ceremonies commemorating a thousand years of the monastery of Montserrat took place. The monastery is 'the site of one of the longest continuous cults of the Virgin Mary'.<sup>67</sup> For the founder of *La Veu de Montserrat* (the weekly that became the disseminator of Catholic Catalanism), Jaume Collell, 'Montserrat is the heart of Catalonia. The holy faith has made it a marvellous temple and love of the *Pàtria* has made it a symbol of its greatness. Montserrat is the eternal monument to the Catalan *Pàtria*'.<sup>68</sup> The following year, 1881, the Black Madonna of Montserrat was proclaimed the Queen and Patron of Catalonia. Pope Leo XIII declared: 'Catalans, in the mountain of Montserrat

and in the devout image that is venerated there, you have Your Mother'. As has been noted, 'all of the Black Madonnas are *powerful* images; they are miracle workers'.<sup>69</sup> Thus, the invocation of the Black Madonna of Montserrat would play a prominent role in the formulation of Catholic Catalanism, a process which would be repeated in the first two decades of Francoism. The most important contribution of Torras i Bages to Catalan nationalism was his publication of *La Tradició Catalana* in 1892. The principal idea of this work was in linking the glory of Medieval Catalonia to its Christian past. A form of corporatism was proposed to transcend the terrors inherent in modernisation, urbanisation and secularisation. 'Medieval institutions, patriarchal life, Christian brotherhood, the guilds, the nobility etc.... Torras] considered that society idyllic in comparison with the modern one'.<sup>70</sup> For Torras i Bages Catholicism and Catalonia were inseparable, and the revitalisation of Catalonia could only come through its return to its Christian roots. 'Perhaps there is no other nation that was so entirely and solidly Christian as Catalonia'.<sup>71</sup> To Torras i Bages is ascribed the refrain, 'Catalonia will be Christian or it will not be', although it does not occur in any of his texts. Torras's works would become the primary reference for those that combined the twin notions of Catholicism and Catalanism.

Although centred in Vic and close to rural and conservative Catalonia, Torras could not be oblivious to the secularisation underway in Barcelona. The prominent Catholic Catalanist of the early part of the twentieth century, Carles Cardó, commented that the aim of Torras was 'to reinforce the Christian spirit of Catalonia' and to build a bridge between modern Catalonia and the old.<sup>72</sup> In the assembly of *Unió Catalanista* of 1891, Torras i Bages drew up a document addressed to Catalan Bishops calling for the non-Latin parts of the Mass to be spoken in Catalan. Torras was also prominent in the Congress that drew up the *Bases* of Manresa in 1892 where he influenced proceedings to ensure that the demand of Catalan Bishops for Catalan Sees was made. This demand for Catalan Bishops would be echoed again in the early part of the twentieth century under Primo de Rivera and in the 1960s under Franco. Bishop Torras i Bages was able to influence the political formation of future leaders of the *Lliga* through his leading role in Catholic organisations: the *Acadèmia Catalana* (Catalan Academy); the *Congregacions Marianes* (Marian Congregations, devoted to the cult of the Virgin Mary) and the *Centre Escolar Catalanista* (Catalanist School Centre). Torras's role can be contrasted with the influential role of Abbot Escarré during the Franco dictatorship. Firstly, in his primary role in the re-creation of the above organisations and, second, in his close relations with prominent Catholic nationalist bourgeois.

Amongst European Catholics the mid nineteenth century had been marked by an intensification in the Cult of the Virgin Mary.<sup>73</sup> The Catalan Cult of the Virgin was centred around the Black Madonna of Montserrat and its associated organisations. The early twentieth century saw the formation of a number of very popular lay organisations, 'all affecting a military style and all dedicated to winning the world for the Virgin Mary'.<sup>74</sup> In 1899, Torras created the *Lliga Espiritual de la Mare de Déu de Montserrat* (Spiritual League of the Mother of

God of Montserrat). The *Lliga Espiritual* maintained close links with the *Unió Catalanista* and Torras i Bages saw his role in these associations as ensuring that Catalonia's political class would be imbued with Catholicism. In this he had considerable success. The dominant figure in conservative Catalanism, Enric Prat de la Riba, once declared 'the dead clay [*fang moridor*] of my body has its origin at Montserrat'.<sup>75</sup> There can be little doubt that Torras i Bages shared the value system of the *Lliga Regionalista* in terms of the economy: '[C]ommerce is undoubtedly a vehicle of civilisation, a factor of peace and social order'.<sup>76</sup> The rural location of the monastery of Montserrat was also important in giving it a prominent role in this formulation of conservative Catalanism. 'Most Marian shrines were built in the countryside... an attempt by rural groups to attain a measure of religious autonomy from central Church authorities, who were mainly associated with urban centres'.<sup>77</sup> The aims of Torras i Bages in ensuring the loyalty to a Catholic vision were successful amongst the elites of the *Lliga*, but the anticlerical riots of the Tragic Week of 1909 demonstrated that the position of the Church was greatly threatened amongst the urban masses. The growing anarchist movement in Barcelona led Torras i Bages to call in 1910 for a special devotion of rosaries to prepare for the coming battles of 'faith', that 'the sects of all Europe are conspiring against'.<sup>78</sup> The Catalan Church would largely retain its influence in rural Catalonia but the next quarter century demonstrated that Barcelona was lost to it.

The mantle of Church Catalanist was carried in the 1920s by Bishop Vidal i Barraquer, who was appointed Bishop of Tarragona in 1919. The same year saw the creation of the *Fundació Bíblica Catalana* (Catalan Bible Foundation) which received its principal funding from Francesc Cambó, the prominent *Lliga* politician. Throughout the first quarter of the twentieth century there were debates in the Church hierarchy as to how to end the process of secularisation. For Torras i Bages, secular education was a grave threat to the Church: 'Catalonia is Christian since it was Catalonia and it would stop being so with a neutral and lay school. Schools form the new generations, and schools without God will create not Christian generations, but impious ones'.<sup>79</sup> A response to these dangers lay behind the foundation in 1925 of the journal *La Paraula Cristiana* by Canon Carles Cardó. As with Vidal i Barraquer, Cardó sought a 'liberal' turn on the part of the Church in an attempt to reach the atheist masses. Cardó called for activism: 'any decades more of abstention and in our Catalonia, Catholicism would be nothing more than a memory'.<sup>80</sup> Cardó proposed in 1919 that the Church should use the 'mother tongue' (i.e. Catalan) if it were to restore its primacy within Catalan society.<sup>81</sup> The lack of 'pious' works in Catalan was also behind the project of the translation of the Bible into Catalan.<sup>82</sup> However, the core of the Church showed itself to be more concerned with the saving of 'souls' than engaging with very real social problems, which only increased residual resentment towards it amongst the working class. The Madrid-based journalist Adolfo Marsillach commented in 1925 on the close bonds between the Church and the politics of regionalism, 'another collaborator to consider in the policy of the *Lliga Regionalista* in the province of Girona – it can also be said about the four Catalan provinces – is the clergy,

both lower and higher.<sup>83</sup> It was clear that the Catalan Church was viewed as a close ally of the Catalanist right.

### The Second Republic, Autonomy and the Spanish Civil War

The dictatorship of Primo de Rivera deepened Catalanist sentiment and the Republic would see not only an increase in political and trades union activity, but increasing cultural development.<sup>84</sup> The economic advances of the 1920s had produced an extensive wave of immigration to Catalonia in the 1920s, a population that did not return as the global economic crisis intensified post 1929. One consequence was the intensification of social conflict in Catalonia in the 1930s, which had both urban and rural manifestations. The CNT took a radical turn during the 1930s and was also prone to factionalism between moderate syndicalists and radical anarchists, influence by the FAI. Whilst other forces emerged to challenge the anarchists, including communists and revolutionary socialists, the CNT maintained its overwhelming dominance. The *Lliga*, the force of conservative Catalanism, was damaged by its initial association with the dictatorship, though it revived somewhat as the Republic proceeded, becoming part of the mobilisation in defence of property, order, the family and religion. In March 1931, *Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya* (Republican Left of Catalonia), ERC was created, successfully fusing left and liberal Catalanist strands. The *Esquerra* would be dominant during the Republic and would be the party that implemented Catalan autonomy, attained in 1932. The Catalan parliamentary left finally succeeded in its aim of displacing the *Lliga* as the hegemonic political force, after thirty years of effort. Whilst there remained smaller Catalan parties, *Esquerra Republicana* would rapidly become the largest political force, mobilising both petit bourgeois and the Catalan small-holders, the *rabassaires*.<sup>85</sup> The latter, became increasingly radicalised in the 1930s and clashed with Catalan landlords defended by the *Lliga*. Whilst Catalonia is seen as industrial economy, in the 1930s it still retained an important agricultural centre. The defence of *rabassaire* landholding rights in 1934 by the *Esquerra* Catalan government saw it clash head on with the new conservative Spanish government and it became the main focus of political dispute in the summer of 1934.<sup>86</sup> Earlier in the year, the *Lliga* had withdrawn altogether from participation in the Catalan parliament, a further element in the increasing political polarisation of these years.

The coincidence of the world economic recession of the 1930s with a period of democratic reform in Spain gave a special intensity to the struggles between these groups.<sup>87</sup> The *Lliga* and CNT were particularly influenced by the idea that a 'crisis of capitalism' was taking place. The result was an increase in 'revolutionism' in the CNT and a further reactionary turn on the part of the *Lliga*. Francesc Cambó himself referred to the arrival of the Republic as inducing in him a 'veritable terror' and he spent the first year or so in self-imposed exile in Paris.<sup>88</sup> For the conservative and Catholic Catalan writer Carles Riba, this was an expression of 'the injustice and ingratitude of the Catalans' towards

Cambó.<sup>89</sup> With the death of the historic leader of republican Catalanism, Francesc Macià, in December 1933, the mantle fell to Lluís Companys to lead both the *Esquerra* and the *Generalitat*. Macià had attained a position as 'father of the nation', having been the leader of the most radical sector of liberal Catalanism and his status in the nationalist canon echoed that of Eamonn de Valera and Charles de Gaulle. Macià was not only leader but 'a myth and a symbol, not only for the most nationalist sectors . . . but for the country as a whole'.<sup>90</sup> Echoes were also found in Macià's invocation of a Catalonia of shopkeepers and small producers, the home and the hearth. Companys was a more divisive figure, who had once acted as a defence lawyer for anarchist defendants. The shift towards insurrectionism amongst sectors of the CNT contributed to increasing factionalism in ERC and the emergence of a proto-fascist Catalanism led by Josep Dencàs.<sup>91</sup> Companys would thus be faced by ever stronger external opposition and internal division, within both his own party and in the government.

*Esquerra Republicana* had by far the largest number of those Catalan deputies supportive of the Republic in the parliament, marshalling 60 of the 67 majority held by the left. With little practical experience beyond that of organising opposition to the dictatorship, ERC and its leadership attained sudden responsibility in local and regional government. The achievement of ERC was in giving to Catalanism a new expression, breaking with the old formula represented by the *Lliga*.<sup>92</sup> Inevitably the rapid rise of the newly constituted formation and its electoral dominance also meant the party suffered from political immaturity.<sup>93</sup> The events of Asturias in the autumn of 1934 and the Catalan response were particularly notable in this regard. As the political situation in the Second Spanish Republic deteriorated, the left decided to respond in October 1934, fearing the entry of the conservative Spanish right led by Gil Robles into the Madrid government represented the overthrow of the Republic. Whilst in the 1933 Spanish general election the *Lliga* defeated ERC, in the Catalan elections the situation was reversed and thus the new right-wing government in Madrid faced a leftist government in Catalonia. The increasing crisis of the summer and autumn of 1934 led the Catalan government to increasingly see itself as representing Republican legality in Spain and in early October Companys proclaimed the 'Catalan State' within the Spanish Federal Republic. The General Strike called in Spain failed not only in Catalonia but throughout Spain and the new Rightist government in Madrid suspended the Catalan autonomy statute and arrested Companys and other leading figures in the Catalan government. They were subsequently tried for military rebellion. Later a puppet Catalan government was appointed. The unwillingness of the CNT to support the General Strike ensured its failure in the case of Catalonia.<sup>94</sup>

*Esquerra* had negotiated a future autonomous government for Catalonia with the progressive parties of Spain in an agreement known as the Pact of San Sebastián of 1930. This agreement led to the creation of the *Generalitat*. The *Lliga* excluded itself from this process, demonstrating its fear of the populist tide sweeping Spain and Catalonia, and it boycotted the first elections to the *Generalitat* held in September 1932. Nevertheless, the *Lliga*, though hostile to

the progressive forces, maintained a certain distance from the Spanish right during the Republic which itself exhibited a vehement opposition to Spain's liberal experiment. Yet, by the time of the elections to the Spanish parliament of February 1936, the *Lliga* had ended its ambiguous status and participated as part of the movement of the Spanish right. Bernat Muniesa has argued that the *Lliga* and Catalan business became increasingly reactionary during the course of the Republic and refers to the influences of Italian fascism on prominent *Lliga* politicians, particularly Francesc Cambó.<sup>95</sup> By the time of the February 1936 election, the *Lliga* had completed its reactionary turn and participated in the election as part of the *Front Català d'Ordre* (Catalan Order Front). During the course of the Spanish Republic, the *Lliga Regionalista* continued to see itself as defender of the Church. The *Front* of 1936 made the Catholic religion one of its principal banners of propaganda.<sup>96</sup> This fact should be born in mind as a partial explanation for the attacks on the Church of July and August 1936. Between February and July 1936, political violence continued in Barcelona, which whilst lower than in Madrid, 'reflected the violent and conflictive character of these months'.<sup>97</sup>

During the Second Republic, Catalan Catholicism was further weakened. The Church would suffer a double displacement: it was closest politically to the *Lliga*, itself discredited by Primo de Rivera's dictatorship. Secondly, the onset of the Republic brought to the fore a new political class of largely secular modernisers, who saw the Church as an agent of backwardness and as a barrier to 'progress'. The religious question and the attempt to resolve the historic dominance of the Catholic Church, and its control of the education system, would become a key battleground of the Republic. The defence of Catholicism became a key mobilising element for the forces of the right. For the leading figure of the Spanish conservatism, José María Gil Robles, 'the rationalist virus' threatened the 'de-Christianisation' of Spanish society<sup>98</sup>.

The populism of the *Esquerra*, and its domination of Catalanism through its power in the *Generalitat*, greatly accelerated the diffusion of Catalan nationalism during the Republic. The *Esquerra* had the support of Catalan intellectuals in their promotion of Catalan language and culture. Anarchist hostility to the 'authoritarian' Socialists and Communists meant that when anarchist supporters voted, (as they did in 1931 and 1936), they would vote for the federalist liberalism of the *Esquerra*. Whilst many of the leading cadres of the Catalan anarchist movement were non-Catalans, the majority of the rank and file were Catalans, and felt that the anti-centralist ideology of the *Esquerra* was the closest (party) political expression to their own radicalism. According to the CNT activist Josep Costa: 'Large sectors of the CNT were more or less Catalanist. Immigrant workers on the other hand tended to be hostile'.<sup>99</sup> In particular, this pragmatic voting by anarchist militants in February 1936 was to see its leading militants released from prison.

Until the arrival of the Republic, the PSOE (Spanish Socialist Party) had shown itself to be hostile to Catalanism and this position accounts for its marginal importance in Catalonia. Whilst the PSOE supported Catalan autonomy in 1930–1931, it and the socialist trade union, the UGT also sought

to defeat their respective rivals, the ERC and the CNT. However Spanish socialism, whether party political or trades union, made little inroad in Catalonia. As the Republic progressed, the PSOE increasingly saw Catalanism as being bourgeois and reactionary.<sup>100</sup> Even the anarchists, long seen as fervently opposed to Catalanism as a bourgeois distraction from the class struggle began, for the first time, to produce newspapers in Catalan in 1936. Previously their propaganda had been in Spanish, even though the Catalan working class was still dominated by Catalan speakers. Anarchist theorising of the national question was little formulated beyond describing, as *Solidaridad Obrera* did in 1931, Catalan nationalism as a 'danger', and that anarchists would 'energetically oppose ... the placing of boundaries and frontiers between the Catalans and their brothers in other regions'.<sup>101</sup>

A prominent role in the Catholic-led nationalist reformulation under Franco would come from those close to or members of Catalonia's Christian Democratic formation, *Unió Democràtica de Catalunya* (UDC). UDC was founded in November 1932 and resulted from a schism in both *Acció Catalana* and the *Lliga*. Those who left *Acció Catalana* did so because of its secularism and the *Lliga* due to conservatism. It also included sections of Catalonia's minute Carlist grouping, the Traditionalists. In its initial manifesto the party declared that its aim was 'the re-nationalisation of our land with the Christian principles that were the foundation of *La Nacionalitat Catalana* [the work of Prat de la Riba]'.<sup>102</sup> UDC brought together those elements of the Catholic middle classes alienated by the anti-clericalism of *Esquerra Republicana*. During the Spanish Republic, UDC was unsuccessful in obtaining representation to the Spanish *Cortes*. In the elections to the *Parlament* of Catalonia in 1932, *Unió* only obtained a single seat, and this was itself made possible due to its electoral alliance with the *Lliga Regionalista*. In the Spanish parliamentary elections of 1933, UDC obtained 13,000 votes.

The constitutional project of the Republic was criticised by Catholic Catalanists because it 'did not contain the traditional spirituality of the Catalan people ... and it ignored the essences of traditional Catalanism'.<sup>103</sup> One of *Unió*'s central figures, Manuel Carrasco i Formiguera left *Acció Catalana* to join *Unió* because of the treatment of the religious question by the Republic. The project of *Unió Democràtica* was to create a party imbued with west European Christian Democratic tradition: '[The party] felt itself to be in the same line as the Basque Catholics, with the special feature of having a more defined social policy'.<sup>104</sup> Yet political polarisation created little space for a Christian Democratic Catalanist party. Even by 1936 the party had only 3,000 members and during the Republic there was little evidence that UDC would ever have been able to challenge the ERC or the *Lliga*. Its discourse was centred around re-Christianisation and the need to overcome the intense social divisions that existed in Catalonia. The leading member of *Unió*, Dr. Vila d'Abal, called for an understanding between the Catalanist left and right: 'The *Lliga* ... is the slave of the men and of the parties to its right that see the only salvation as lying with the sword; and the *Esquerra* is under the pressure of the anarchised masses who see the only salvation as lying in the bomb or in anarchy'.<sup>105</sup>

However, though *Unió Democràtica* was a marginal party it was closely linked to a Catalan religious association, the *Federació de Joves Cristians* (Federation of Young Christians), founded in 1931 by Albert Bonet. The FJC combined Catholicism with Catalanism: as they sang in the *Himne Fejocista* (FJC Hymn), 'we are Christians and Catalans, which is like saying hero twice over'.<sup>106</sup> The *Federació* 'aspired to Christianise all Catalan young people'.<sup>107</sup> By 1935 it had 305 groups in Catalonia with a total membership of 14,000, which rose to 18,000 in 1936. It was an organisation that looked to French non-Rightist Catholicism for inspiration, and following French and Belgian developments, the *Joventut Obrera Cristiana* (Christian Youth Workers) was created within the FJC in an attempt to win the de-Christianised urban population to the Church. Its importance in this study is that its discourse would be gradually revived in sectors of the Church in the late 1940s and beyond. FJC and other Catholic components would feed into the re-formulated Catalanism that was forged under the Franco regime.

The attempted military coup of July 1936 failed in Barcelona and its defeat resulted in a radicalisation of the CNT-led working class and the subsequent outbreak of revolution. The power of the *Generalitat* dissolved as the anarchist-led working class defeated the insurrectionaries and effectively took power in Catalonia. *Esquerra Republicana*, seemingly the dominant political force of the 1930s 'wilted away' and in the famous words of George Orwell, the working class was 'in the saddle'.<sup>108</sup> As Graham has noted, it was the Catalan communists who emerged to fill the space between a weakened ERC and an anti-political CNT.<sup>109</sup> Such was the variety of political organisations in Catalonia that there were five Marxist parties in early 1936.<sup>110</sup> The *Partit Socialista Unificat de Catalunya* (Unified Socialist Party of Catalonia), PSUC was formed on the cusp of civil war by a number of Catalan communist and socialist entities. On its creation the party had around 6,000 members but this had spiralled to 70,000 by the end of the war. The PSUC, being the Catalan arm of Stalin's foreign policy, sought to contain the social revolution and members of the Catalan middle classes felt safe within its embrace. As the only major power to support the Republic, the USSR was invoked as the leading supporter of anti-fascism.<sup>111</sup> From early on there was also tensions with its co-religionary, the *Partido Comunista de España* (Communist Party of Spain), PCE, the latter seeking to end the anomalous status of Catalan communism.<sup>112</sup> This friction with the PCE would continue in the post-war years and would ensure a long-lasting reputation of the PSUC as a party that also acted in the Catalan national interest. As will subsequently be seen, the two strands of Catalanist reformulation under Franco would come from two relatively weak areas in the 1930s: Catalan communism and, Catalanist Catholicism.

Pàgès has pointed out that it is impossible to understand the Civil War in Catalonia without taking into account that a veritable social and economic revolution took place.<sup>113</sup> The Spanish Civil War in Catalonia was distinct from that fought in the rest of the state. Firstly, there was the clash between the anarchist-led revolution and the middle-class progressive nationalism-republicanism of the *Esquerra*, the latter supported by the Catalan communists

in the PSUC. Secondly, there was a power struggle at state level between the *Generalitat* and the government of the Republic that ended in the emasculation of the former. The attitude of the Republican government towards the autonomous government of Catalonia as the Civil War progressed is found in the remarks of Juan Negrín in July 1938: 'I am not making a war against Franco ... so that its offspring is a provincial and stupid separatism in Barcelona ... I am waging war for Spain ... [and] for its glory'.<sup>114</sup> The third element of the conflict was the anti-Catalanism of the Franco forces, itself part of a long tradition on the Spanish right. The Civil War compounded centrifugal tendencies that had emerged during the Republic.<sup>115</sup> Following Catalan autonomy in 1932, the Basque Country had attained its own in October 1936 and would have been followed by Galicia had not the war intervened.

One consequence of the social and political revolution in Catalonia was the assassination of over 2,000 priests and members of the religious orders.<sup>116</sup> The killings were accompanied by a sustained attack on the buildings of the Catholic Church. This represented 'the most intense anti-religious assault in the history of twentieth century Europe'.<sup>117</sup> The killings in Catalonia included three bishops: Irurita of Barcelona; Huix of Lleida; and Borràs, auxiliary Bishop of Tarragona. At the monastery of Montserrat 23 monks were killed and it was abandoned until the end of the Civil War. 'On the Monday [following 18 July], nobody was in any doubt. Everything was lost. The news began to circulate that in Barcelona they were burning churches and killing priests and members of religious orders'.<sup>118</sup> Only the Catholic Church was attacked, no Protestant churches were targeted and no Protestants were killed. Protestant church services were allowed to continue at the height of the revolutionary tide, in July and August 1936.<sup>119</sup> What occurred in Catalonia was a veritable pogrom against Catholicism. 'Jacinto Verdaguer, Antonio Nicolau, Juan Maragall, Luis Millet. I'm evoking the time when these names were venerated: [they are] daydreams of the years when we could not predict nor even imagine that the atrocious day would arrive when these men would be denied and persecuted in "the name of Catalonia"'.<sup>120</sup>

Some explanation of why it was the Catholic Church that was attacked with such vehemence is required. A left Socialist member of the *Cortes* of the period argued that 'in other countries the crowd, in a moment of national uprising, attacks banks and palaces, while here [Spain] it burns convents and churches'.<sup>121</sup> It was also noted in 1938, that in 'certain churches political sermons against liberalism and socialism had been preached during the election, particularly in Barcelona'.<sup>122</sup> In the province of Lleida 47 per cent of those killed in the first revolutionary month were members of religious orders and during the course of the Civil War, 65 per cent of the priests of that diocese were murdered. Jaume Barrull has noted that in that territory, there 'were no urban masses nor any libertarian tradition'. For Barrull, the explanation for the ferocity of the attack on the Church lies in the fact that 'the revolutionaries of 1936 ... identified the Church ... as the principal enemy to attack, independently of whether it had made explicit or not its support for the counter-revolution that began that July'.<sup>123</sup> The Church was seen as a primary source of 'obscurantism' and a

firm ally of political reaction. Another factor was a popular assumption that churches and convents were used to store arms for the military rebels and that people were shot at from these very buildings.<sup>124</sup>

Certainly anarchist anti-clerical discourse contributed to the climate of anti-Church hostility. There were also other examples such as the call of the POUM in the summer of 1936 to 'destroy the Church as an institution'.<sup>125</sup> This fervent anti-clericalism was not a monopoly of the revolutionary forces. *Estat Català*, a radical nationalist party, that included on its fringes proto-fascist elements, declared through its newspaper *Diari de Barcelona*, 'we believe that our scruples about the burning of churches has been exaggerated. It is worth sacrificing the small heritage that [churches] represent, because if we leave churches standing, in the long term the [religious] processions will start again'.<sup>126</sup> In an interview with the French newspaper, *L'Oeuvre*, Lluís Companys, president of the *Generalitat*, justified the excesses of the people towards the Church because of the clerical participation in the events of 19 July 1936.<sup>127</sup> The existence of deeply rooted anti-clericalism in Spain since the Middle Ages, the attacks on the Church in the nineteenth century and the discourse of the radical republicanism known as *Lerrouxisme* were all other contributory factors. Furthermore, the Catholic Church in Catalonia and throughout Spain had historically been associated with the right, power and order. There was no Irish or Polish tradition of Catholicism in Catalonia where the Church was seen to be on the side of the people. The hatred towards the Church was such that the attacks did not distinguish between those devoted to charitable works and those in the service of the rich.<sup>128</sup>

Those who were politically active in *Unió Democràtica* were also perceived as counter-revolutionary elements by the revolutionary forces on the left, partly due to their Catholicism. This view of the principal party of Catholic Catalanism was confirmed in the eyes of the revolutionaries when elements close to UDC such as the *Federació de Joves Cristians*, founded the Carlist-inspired *requetès* (militias) of Montserrat which fought on the side of Franco. The *requetès* took their name from Montserrat's Marian tradition calling themselves *els requetès de Nostra Senyora de Montserrat* (the militia of Our Lady of Montserrat).<sup>129</sup> The militia members of Montserrat totalled a number of some 800, 22 of whom were to become priests after the end of the Civil War. For the representatives and supporters of liberal democracy in Catalonia, fear of the anarchist-led working class was profound during the period of the Republic. One of the principal aims of the Franco-led military revolt was the restoration of 'order' and certainly bourgeois 'order' collapsed in July and August 1936, particularly in Barcelona. All of the fears of Catalan elites seemed confirmed as expropriation of businesses and their conversion into companies administered by the workers occurred. The promise of the restoration of 'order' by the military-led alliance of the Spanish Nationalists would account for the support given to it by the former supporters of the *Lliga Regionalista*.<sup>130</sup>

Those that supported *Unió Democràtica* were caught in a pincer between working-class revolution and Spanish Nationalist reaction. Many prominent *Lliga* supporters were able to cross to Nationalist Spain and the party and tradition

the *Lliga* represented imploded. For those in the political tradition of *Unió Democràtica* this option was more problematic because of their more deeply held Catalanist beliefs. This was compounded by the fact that UDC had not participated in the *Front d'Ordre*, which would be a minimum condition to receive any kind of acceptance (or tolerance) in Francoist-held territory. The experience of *Unió Democràtica de Catalunya* during the Spanish Civil War bore many similarities to that of its co-religionary, the Basque *Partido Nacionalista Vasco* (Basque Nationalist Party), PNV. Although UDC was on the political right like the PNV, those that supported the Franco forces viewed it as an anti-Spanish nationalist formation, and therefore with hostility. In 1938, the leading member of *Unió Democràtica*, Manuel Carrasco i Formiguera, was executed in Burgos in spite of his Catholic fervour. The leading Francoist ideologue, Maximiano García Venero declared in April 1937: 'For us it is indispensable to emphasise that we are fighting against the "separatist-reds". Separatists of the Right and separatists of the Left'.<sup>131</sup> Just as the Francoists had no difficulties in executing Basque nationalist priests, they could, in the same way, execute a Catalan Catholic. However, in Catalonia, unlike the Basque country, the priests were killed by elements of the revolutionary forces of the left. Neither revolutionary transformation nor 'revolutionary justice' occurred in the Basque Country, where the PNV maintained its hegemony until defeat in the Civil War. Thus, the historical trajectory of Basque nationalism was distinct from its Catalan counterpart, and the nexus between nationalism and Catholicism was more firmly rooted in the Basque case.<sup>132</sup> The PNV slogan was, after all, that of representing 'God and the Old Laws'.

For prominent representatives of the *Lliga* such as Francesc Cambó, the Spanish Civil War was perceived as a struggle between 'civilization' and 'barbarism'. In the first few weeks after July 1936, some 400 members of the *Lliga* were killed. Cambó and others raised financial support for the military junta set up to fight against the Republic. Cambó managed to escape from Spain and funded the publication of a book that would be used to gather support for Franco in Catholic circles in Europe and the USA. This work was called *La Persecución Religiosa en España* and was written by Joan Estelrich, who was himself a leading figure in the *Lliga*. The work listed all known attacks on religious buildings and the killings of members of religious orders, though significantly no mention was made of the Spanish Nationalists' executions of Basque priests.<sup>133</sup> Joan Ventosa i Calvell, a *Lliga* deputy to the *Cortes* who had been a Spanish government minister, used his influence and high profile abroad to promote the cause of Franco. As a result, amongst those who would attempt to rebuild Catalan nationalism in the 1940s and the 1950s, the *Lliga* would be viewed as a party that had 'betrayed' Catalonia and its ideology would not be invoked as part of a reformulated Catalanist idea.

After the revolution and the wave of anti-clerical killings, it is perhaps not surprising that the Church in Catalonia saw its only hope of salvation, indeed its very continuance in the victory of the Spanish Nationalists. Yet, in spite of the traumatic position of Catholics in Catalonia, the Catalan Church was viewed with suspicion by the Spanish Nationalists. At the time of the 'libera-

tion' of the monastery of Montserrat, the feeling was strong amongst the monks that it was fortunate that the Spanish soldiery had moved on quickly. One of the occupying officers declared to a monk that the soldiers had hoped to make things unpleasant for 'these separatist monks'.<sup>134</sup> A San Sebastian newspaper made clear its own view regarding the *Federació de Joves Cristians* in May 1938: 'Although to a lesser extent than in the Basque Country, in Catalonia too there existed a group of false Catholics inclined to serve tribal [cabileño] nationalism at the expense of the Church'.<sup>135</sup>

It must be recalled that the alliance that made up the Franco forces was represented principally by the forces of extreme reaction and was itself hostile to the parliamentary right. The resort to arms was undertaken because of the perception of failure of the Spanish parliamentary right to reverse the progressive measures of the Republic. Gil Robles, who came very close to endorsing fascism during the Republic, would be held in contempt as one of those responsible for the failures of the Republic and part of the *ancien régime* that was to be swept away by Franco's new order.<sup>136</sup> During the Civil War and the Franco dictatorship the conventionally understood meanings of political vocabulary underwent a shift. Those who in Anglo-Saxon political terminology would be extreme conservatives could, under Franco, be perceived as dangerous liberals. Thus, the *Lliga Regionalista*, which had throughout its existence displayed its commitment to the essentials of the Spanish parliamentary system, and had supported the coup of Primo de Rivera in 1923, was, in the eyes of the Spanish Nationalists, part of that failed nineteenth-century *parliamentary* tradition. The *Lliga* was of course a Catalan party and the most common epithet used about the *Lliga*, as with some sectors of the Church was their 'separatism'. As has been noted previously, what little 'separatism' there was in Catalonia was weak and poorly mobilised and the *Lliga* had been as concerned about developments in Spain as in Catalonia. The Spanish Nationalist use of the word 'separatist' serves to indicate the level of Rightist delirium and paranoia that operated in Francoist Spain.

In the choice between Franco and the '*incontrolats*' (lit. those 'out of control', the common term used to refer to those who had been most active in the attack on the Church), the Catalan Church chose Franco. Two of the principal promoters of the idea of the Civil War as a religious crusade were in fact the Catalan bishops Gomá and Pla i Daniel. In the later years of the Franco regime, Catholic nationalists tended to mythologise the Spanish Civil War. They saw it as an anti-Catalan war and ignored the Catalan civil war fought by those with radically differing conceptions of what Catalonia should be. The Bishop of Tarragona, Vidal i Barraquer, opposed the Spanish bishops' collective pastoral of July 1937 as he believed it would be counter-productive for the Church to associate itself so directly with the Franco forces and he feared for the consequences for Catholics in 'Red' territory. He did not oppose the pastoral in itself, but rather the use to which it was put: 'I find it admirable in its nature and form ... but I do not consider it appropriate under the present conditions'.<sup>137</sup> The Bishop of Girona, Josep Cartaña, who did sign the bishops' Pastoral did so because 'he believed that the military rising of July 1936 had prevented an anti-

religious and Communist revolution, which had been carefully planned beforehand'.<sup>138</sup>

A cursory examination of the Spanish Civil War and its causes would show that one of the most prominent political sentiments holding together the disparate tendencies within the Spanish Nationalist alliance was that of Spanish unity. Catalans were not only *rojos* (reds) but *rojos-separatistas* (separatist-reds). The victory of Franco in the Civil War resulted in complete defeat for both the working-class revolution and for Catalan nationalism. One of the most important weapons in the ideological armoury of the Franco regime was that of Spanish unity: *España, Una, Grande y Libre* (One Spain, Great and Free), remained a constant invocation throughout the dictatorship. The regime's view of Spanish unity was premised on the assumption that there existed a historic Spanish nation which incorporated all within the frontiers of the Spanish state. Recognition could be permitted to regional sentiment on a folkloric level, but any suggestion that Catalonia possessed the attributes of a nation was anathema to those that rallied to Franco.

Anyone that questioned these fundamental tenets was portrayed as not only unpatriotic but '*contra-España*' (Anti-Spain). In the Manichean world view held during the Civil War and dictatorship, *España eterna* (Eternal Spain) battled against the anti-Spanish conspiracy of *rojos-separatistas*. As Franco himself put it in 1937, 'the character of each region will be respected, though without prejudicing national unity, which we absolutely demand, with one language, Spanish, and one personality, which will be Spanish'. In this one statement Franco revealed the project of his regime: to create in years what had taken the French state more than a century to achieve, a culturally homogeneous, monoglot population. The Francoist reaction against the Spanish parliamentary tradition was a reaction above all at what were seen to be its failures, prominent amongst them being that it had 'allowed' nationalisms to develop in Catalonia and the Basque Country. Xavier Arbos and Antoni Puigsec argue that *españolismo* (all that symbolised Spain in the eyes of Spanish nationalism) was the most important factor in motivating the military rebellion of 1936.<sup>139</sup> Whilst this statement is open to dispute, it does give an indication of the important ideological role played by *españolismo* on the Spanish right. Events such as the granting of autonomy to Catalonia in 1932 were viewed by the Spanish right (and elements of the Spanish left) as threats to the integrity of the Spanish state. Ferrer i Sanxis refers to the Madrid-Barcelona conflicts over the autonomy statute as exhibiting something parallel to a 'cold war'.<sup>140</sup> The autonomy debate in the *Cortes* of 1931–1932 was one of the most polemical parliamentary debates of the Spanish Republic and was described by *La Veu de Catalunya* (the conservative Catalanist newspaper) as marking a 'return to the oldest times of anti-Catalanism'.<sup>141</sup> Anti-Catalanist sentiment had a long history on the Spanish right. Some have argued that Castilian incomprehension towards Catalans and the Catalan language goes back to the seventeenth century. A Spanish Court document of 1628 unearthed by John Elliot states: 'Amongst other things, the problem with the Catalans is that they refuse to speak the language of the Empire'.<sup>142</sup>

For the forces of reaction in Spain who obtained victory in the Spanish Civil War, the failures of the liberal political project in the nineteenth century meant that complete control of the structures of the state was necessary to contain both threats to the prevailing economic order and to the unity of the state, challenged by Basque and Catalan nationalism. Until 1939, Catalonia contained one of the most radicalised working-class movements in Europe, and uniquely it was an anarchist-dominated movement. An often intense class conflict had been the background to the political trajectory of Catalonia in this period. It was a conflict that culminated in proletarian vengeance in July–August 1936 and met with the revenge of the bourgeoisie post-1939. The dual nature of the conflict in Catalonia, class-based and nationalist, accounted for the hostility exhibited by the military and the governing elites of Spain. The Franco regime would have as its aim the extirpation of both 'problems'. The regime, a product of its time, can be best understood as part of the broader European Rightist reaction of the 1930s, a response to the perceived breakdown and crisis in the old European order. This crisis was inaugurated by the cataclysm of the First World War and compounded by the Bolshevik revolution of November 1917.

There were, of course, national peculiarities and in Spain the challenge presented by peripheral nationalism was a more acute one than that faced by any other western European power. Furthermore, the nationalist challenges to the Spanish state occurred in two of the most economically advanced areas of the national territory and their principal gains occurred during a period of crisis for the state. The fear of territorial dismemberment expressed by broad swathes of the Spanish right reflected the acute anxiety within Spanish nationalism of the international status and position of Spain if it lost the important economically advanced territories of Catalonia and the Basque Country. This fear found innumerable outlets in the 1930s, and can be best encapsulated in the comment of José Calvo Sotelo, the Spanish conservative parliamentarian: 'Better a Red Spain than a Broken Spain'. For the *Falange*, 'separatism' was equated with 'decadence', which it was their duty to erase.<sup>143</sup> Franco's bloody victory in the Civil War gave an opportunity to fanatical anti-Catalanist elements to attempt the extirpation of Catalan national identity.

The development of Catalan nationalism during the first 40 years of the twentieth century had given to Catalan language and culture a vitality not seen since the late Middle Ages. The creation of the *Estatut* represented the restoration of a Catalan sovereignty that had been abolished in 1714. The period of the *Generalitat* (1931–1939) represented an expansion in the programme of Catalanisation initiated by the *Mancomunitat* (1914–1925). Although the Catalan national movement would be able to reconstruct (and transform) most aspects of Catalanism in the later years of the Franco dictatorship, by 1975 it would not restore its position to that attained in 1939. Catalan-language publications were numerous, including several dailies and a vast range of weekly and monthly publications. The Catalan language was firmly rooted in the school system, and was used as a language of administration and in the media of mass communication. The Franco regime would repress a culture that had been in the ascendent.

# 2

## Repression, 1939–1955

The day arrived when Catalonia, victim of its own mistakes, found itself shipwrecked in the abyss of a revolution whose only aim was to scorn and destroy it ... Today, Catalonia redeemed gives itself with fervour ... to the fruitful task of material and spiritual resurgence and says to Franco: You saved me from a death without resurrection.<sup>1</sup>

Franco's regime was the Spanish expression of the European crisis that began in 1914 with the outbreak of the First World War. The period between 1914 and 1945 is often referred to as the European Civil War, and produced the revolutionary challenge of organised labour, the collapse and partial reconstitution of the existing order, agricultural and financial crisis and the gradual adoption of far-right or militaristic solutions to these crises.<sup>2</sup> The ruling order in Europe sought new means to deal with these unprecedented challenges. The Spanish Civil War was one manifestation of this European systemic crisis. In the Spanish case, a further layer of complexity was added by the multinational reality of the state. Whilst Eastern Europe had irredentism and minorities with loyalty to another state, in Spain national minorities with historically founded claims for autonomy and even independence were to be found. Apart from a minority strand within Galician nationalism, the nationalisms in Spain had no external focus. Furthermore, as we have seen in the case of the Basque Country and Catalonia, the emergence of nationalist movements was interpreted by Spanish conservative elites as threats to the very continuity of Spain.

The failed or delayed projects of state modernisation in Spain would now be implemented by dictatorial methods. In their pursuance, there would be no place for the languages and cultures that the right-wing alliance forged during the Civil War and led by Franco termed *anti-España* (anti-Spain). Throughout its existence the Franco regime was a harsh military dictatorship and police state: three components of the state held essential functions: the *Falange-Movimiento* (Political), the Army (Order) and the Church (Morality).<sup>3</sup> Ironically for the future development of the Franco regime in Catalonia, some of the Spanish troops that entered Barcelona in 1939 carried with them Falangist propaganda written in Catalan that was to be distributed in the city. After a dispute between the military and the *Falange* the material in Catalan was prevented from being distributed by the head of the forces of occupation,